

Saint *Austins*
Care for the Dead.

OR
HIS BOOK
De Curâ pro Mortuis.
Translated into English.

The second Edition, Revised and
Corrected.



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Aurelius Augustin

TO

Paulin Bishop,

*Concerning Care for the
Dead,*

CHAP. I.



Have been a long
time your debtour,
venerable Brother &
fellow Bishop *Paul-*

linus, for the Letters you sent
me by the servants of our most
religious sister *Flora*, wherein
you propounded a question,
viz. Whither it profits any one
after his decease, to have his
body buried at the memory of

The me-
mory of
the saints
is the
place
where
their bo-
dy or re-
licks are
kept.

some Saint. For this, it seems, the above mentioned widow had enquired of you, concerning her sonne deceased in those parts : to whom you had returned answer to her comfort; signifying withall, that the thing was accomplished, which with such maternall and pious affection she desired ; namely, to have the corps of the faithfull youth *Cynegius* departed, put in the Church of the most blessed Confessour *Felix* : by occasion whereof it came to passe, that you writ also at the same time to me by the same messengers, intimating the question above-said, and demanding my opinion therein, yet in such manner, as you do not altogether conceal your own. For you say, the desire of those faithfull
and

religious minds, which procure such things to be done for them, seem not to you to be altogether vain; and that the custome of the Catholick Church, *which is to pray for the dead* cannot be to no purpose: so as, that even thence we ought to conjecture, that it is of some avail for a man after his death, if by his faithfull friends living such a place be provided for the interment of his body, as may procure him the assistance or *patronage of some Saint*. But you say withall, that although this be so, yet you see not sufficiently how the opinion can be reconciled to that of the Apostle, who saith, *We shall all stand at Christs Tribunall, that every one may receive according to what he hath done in his bo-*

Noteth's
The custome of the Church to pray for the dead.

Patronage of Saints usefull for the dead.

dy, whither it be good or evil.
 For say you, without all
 doubt this sentence of the A-
 postle doth tell us, that That
 which shall profit us after
 death, must be done before, *viz.*
 in our life, therefore not then
 to be done, when every one is
 to receive for what he hath
 done already.

But the difficulty is resolved
 thus ; namely, that it is procu-
 red by the manner of life which
 we lead here *in the body*, that
 such Things as these should do
 us good after we are departed :
 and so it holds true still, that
according to things done in the
body men receive, yea when
 they receive benefit by what is

Saint
 August.
 in his
 Enchiri-
 dion ad
 Lauren-

tium chap. 110. asserts these threefold sorts of
 Christians, whereof the middle sort is onely ca-
 pable of help after this life, which clearly con-
 cludes Purgatory.

done

done for them religiously after their decease. For it must be confest, there are some sorts of men, to whom the doing of such Things as these would be of no advantage at all, to wit, either those who have lived so ill, that they deserve not to be holpen by them, or those who have lived so well, they need not. It is therefore by the manner of life which every one leadeth *in this body*, that the things religiously done for them after the body, do either profit or not profit at all. For certainly, if no merit be acquired in this life, by which such Things may be rendred profitable to a man after his death; *Note,* it were then, that is to say, after he is dead, in vain to seek it. *The Church used then an office of the dead.* So we see, neither the *office of the Church*, nor our own care

of our deceased friends is idle or vain ; and yet that it is true, that *every one receiveth according to those Things which he hath done in the body, whether it be good or evil, our Lord himself rendring unto every one according to his works.* For as we say , it is procured by the life a man leadeth *in the body*, that what is thus done for him, should profit him after his body is dead. And to have said onely thus much might I conceive, be a sufficient answer to your demand : but by reason of some other Things, which seem to me not unworthy our consideration , I shall crave your attention yet a little further.

Maccha-
bees al-
ledged
for Scri-
pture.

We reade in the Book of *Macchabees* , That sacrifice was offered for the dead. And though

though it were not found at all
 in any place of the antient Scrip-
 ture, yet the Authority of the
universall Church, which is
clear for this custome, is not
 lightly to be regarded; where
 in the prayers which the Priest
 maketh unto our Lord God,
 standing at his *Altar*, recom-
 mendation of the dead hath its
 due place.

Univer-
 sall cu-
 stome of
 praying
 for the
 dead.
 Masse
 for the
 dead.

CHAP. II.

WE must therefore
 somewhat more di-
 ligently enquire into the point
 propounded, *viz. Whither the*
place of buriall may be any ad-
vantage to a deceased soul?
 And first, we shall not so much
 look upon the common opi-
 nion, as examine according to
 the sacred Scriptures of our re-

A 5 ligion,

figion, whither indeed it ad-
deth any thing to the misery
and affliction of mens souls af-
ter this life, *if their bodies be
not buried at all.* Out of
all doubt, that which *Virgil*
some where saith is of little
Aeneid, 6 truth, that the souls of unbu-
ried people are forbidden the
passage of the Infernall River,
as if forsooth

*They might not cross that si'ent stream
of horrid Phlegethon,
Till Superstition had compos'd
the Urns of every one.*

For what Christian heart
can be moved with such ficti-
ons? seeing our Lord Jesus, that
Christians might dy securely
under their hands, who for som
time were to have power over
their bodies, assures them that
*not an hair of their head
should perish*; and therefore ex-
horts

horts them not to fear those who after *they have killed the body, have no more to do.* Upon which subject, in my first book of the City of God, I suppose I may have spoken sufficiently to stop their mouths, who charged the Christians with the calamities of those times, especially that which Rome suffered by those barbarous people, yea objected that Christ either could not, or would not help his own; to whom when as I replied, that the souls of the faithfull people were at that time largely rewarded by Christ for their sufferings, they objected again, or rather reproached me with the dishonour of their unburied bodies: whereupon I was forced to inlarge my self somewhat upon that subject,

concern-

concerning the buriall of men,
 which I will here set down in
 “ the words I then used. Nei-
 “ ther indeed was it possible,
 “ they should all be buried in
 “ such a ruine of Carcases. Nor
 “ will a pious man who be-
 “ leeveth that saying of our
 “ Saviour much fear this, nor
 “ think that beasts, which by
 “ chance devour their bodies,
 “ can at all prejudice their Re-
 “ surrection, being assured,
 “ that *not an hair of their head*
 “ *shall perish.* For he who is
 “ Truth it self would never
 “ have said, *Fear not them*
 “ *which kill the body, but*
 “ *cannot kill the soul,* if it
 “ could be any prejudice to the
 “ future life of the Saints, that
 “ which their enemies do to
 “ their bodies here. Unlesse
 “ peradventure a man will
 be

"be so absurd, as to contend,
 "that we ought not before our
 "death to fear them which kill
 "the body, *viz.* least they
 "should kill it, but yet that
 "we ought to fear, least after
 "death they should not suffer
 "that body to be buried, which
 "they have already killed.
 "For then certainly it were not
 "true which Christ sayes,
 "*They which kill the body,*
 "*have no more to do,* if so be
 "they could do any thing
 "more towards the dead car-
 "case, that were to be regard-
 "ed. But God forbid, that any
 "thing should be false which
 "the Truth hath spoken. For
 "we say, they which kill, do
 "something while they kill the
 "body, because in the body
 "there is sense and some feel-
 "ing, while it is to be killed :
 but

“But that afterwards *they*
 “*have no more to do*, becaule
 “in a body already killed
 “there is no sense at all.
 “Wherefore many bodies of
 “good Christians have hap-
 “pened to want buriall, but
 “none of them could be ever
 “excluded from heaven and
 “earth both, which he totally
 “filleth with his presence, who
 “best knoweth, how and
 “whence to restore again that
 “which he once made. It is
 “said indeed in the Psalmes,
 Psal. 78. “*They exposed the Bodies of thy*
 “*servants for meat to the fowls*
 “*of the air, and the flesh of thy*
 “*Saints to the beasts of the*
 “*land, they poured out their*
 “*bloud like water round about*
 “*Hierusalem, and there was*
 “*none that would bury them.*
 “But this was spoken rather to
 aggravate

"aggravate the cruelty of those
 "who did such things, then to
 "intimate any unhappinesse in
 "them which suffered : For
 "although such things as these
 "may seem hard, yea horri-
 "ble in the eyes of men, yet
 "*precious doubtlesse in the*
 "*sight of the Lord is the death*
 "*of his Saints.*

"And therefore all these par-
 "ticulars, that is to say, pro-
 "vision of a Funerall, the qua-
 "lity of Sepulture, the pomp
 "and magnificence of Exequies
 "may seem rather to be, as it
 "were, comforts of the liv-
 "ing, then any helps for the
 "dead. For certainly if a state-
 "ly Buriall could of it self any
 "thing advantage a wicked
 "man, to be poorly buried, or
 "not buried at all would be
 "some prejudice to a good ;
 which

" which we know to be false;
 " for doubtlesse that rich glut-
 Luc. 16. " ton in the Gospell, *who was*
 " *clothed in purple and fared so*
 " *deliciously every day*, when
 " he died, had a very sumptu-
 " ous Funerall made him by
 " his kindred and servants; but
 " yet far more glorious in the
 " sight of God was that given
 " unto the poor begger by the
 " hands of Angels, who carri-
 " ed him out not unto any
 " Tomb of Marble, but (to the
 " place where he desired to be)
 " *into the bosome of Abraham.*
 " 'Tis true, those against whom
 " we have undertaken to de-
 " fend the City of God, laugh
 " at these things, neverthelesse
 " even their own Philosophers
 " oftentimes have seem'd to
 " make as little account of the
 " rites of Sepulture; and whole
 Armies

" Armies of men, when they
 " come into the field with reso-
 " lution to dy for their tempo-
 " rall countryes, of all things
 " mind least where their bo-
 " dies fall, or what beasts shall
 " devour them ; yea the Poets
 " themselves not without ap-
 " plause have been heard to
 " say, *Heaven covers him who*
 " *hath no Coffin*: how much lesse Lucan.
 " ought they then to insult over
 " Christians concerning their
 " bodies lying unburied , to
 " whom they cannot but know,
 " restauration of their flesh
 " and of all the members of
 " their body is promised , by
 " him who is sufficiently able
 " to do it, yea and shall be in
 " a moment perfectly made
 " good unto them, whether
 " from the earth, or from those
 " remotest receptacles of other
 ele-

“elements, into which the sub-
 “stance of their bodies by ne-
 “ver so many changes, and
 “changes upon changes may
 “be retired.

CHAP. III.

“**W**Hich yet we speak
 “not to the intent
 “the bodies of men, especially
 “those of the Faithfull and
 “Just, should be neglected
 “after death, and thrown out
 “of sight as some other com-
 “mon carcases, for as much as
 “the Holy Ghost hath been
 “pleased to use them in their
 “times as his own organs or
 “instruments *unto all good*
 “*works*. For if but a ring, vest-
 “ment, or some other thing
 “belonging to our Father be
 “very dear unto us, and so
 much

"much the more, by how
 "much our naturall affection
 "was greater and more lively
 "towards him; in no sort cer-
 "tainly may the bodies of men
 "be despised, which we carry
 "about us much more intrinse-
 "cally and nearly united then
 "any vestment whatsoever:
 "for our bodies pertain not un-
 "to matter of ornament or any
 "extrinsecall help, but to the
 "very substance of our nature.
 "Whence it is also, that the
 "Funeralls of just men in old
 "time, were performed with
 "a great deal of piety & care;
 "their Exequies solemnly cele-
 "brated, and the places of their
 "buriall with much diligence
 "provided, yea themselves in
 "their life time, would fre-
 "quently give command con-
 "cerning the burying and re-
 moving

Gen. 23.
 47. 49. 50.

Tob. 3. 12

"moving of their bodies after
 "their death, as there was
 "cause. And Tobias is com-
 "mended by no lesse Testi-
 "mony then of an Angel, to
 "have merited with God, for
 "that he was diligent to bury
 "the dead. Yea our Lord
 "himself, (although he were
 "to rise again within three
 "dayes after his Passion) yet
 "cōmended the care the good
 "woman had of his buriall,
 "and commanded that the
 "good work she had done in
 "providing such precious oint-
 "ments to imbalm his body,
 "should be preached, to her
 "praise all the world over :
 "& there is honourable men-
 "tion made in the Gospel of
 "those who took down the
 "body of our Lord from the
 "Crosse, and gave it Buriall.

All

" All which Authorities yet
 " are not to teach us, that there
 " is any sense in dead bodies,
 " but onely, seeing that such
 " offices of piety are pleasing
 " to God, they signifie unto us,
 " that even the dead bodies do
 " pertain unto the divine Pro-
 " vidence, and this the rather
 " to confirm our Faith in the
 " Resurrection. And hence al-
 " so we may learn not unpro-
 " fitably, how great reward
 " there may be for such Alms
 " as we give unto living peo-
 " ple, when even that which is
 " bestowed upon the dead and
 " livelesse members is not lost
 " with God. There are indeed
 " some other particulars, which
 " the Holy Patriarchs who
 " speak them, would have to
 " be understood concerning
 " the buriall and translating of
 their

“ their bodies after death, as
 “ spoken by a propheticall spi-
 “ rit, but this is no place to treat
 “ of them, seeing that which
 “ we have deliver’d already
 “ may suffice. For if those
 “ things which are necessary
 “ to the sustenance of the liv-
 “ ing, and cannot be wanted
 “ but with great difficulty, as
 “ victualls, apparell &c. yet
 “ do never (when they are
 “ wanted) violate or over-
 “ throw the virtue of patience
 “ in good people, nor extir-
 “ pate piety quite out of the
 “ mind, but rather exercise and
 “ revive it; much lesse doubtles
 “ can those things, w^{ch} are usu-
 “ ally expended in Funeralls &
 “ Exequies upon deceased per-
 “ sons, (when they happen to
 “ be wanting) make those per-
 “ sons miserable, who are al-
 ready

"ready settled and at rest in
 "those secret Tabernacles of
 "the just. And therefore when
 "it so fell out in the devastati-
 "on of that great City and of
 "the adjacent Towns that the
 "bodies of good christians had
 "not Buriall, we may not pre-
 "sently charge either the living
 "with any crime thereabout,
 "who could not help it, nor
 "yet the dead with any great
 "misfortune, who were as lit-
 "tle sensible of it. This is my
 opinion concerning the matter
 of Sepulture in generall, which
 I have therefore translated into
 this book out of that other of
 the City of God, in regard it
 was something more easie for
 me to repeat it in this, then to
 deliver it in a new manner.

CHAP. IIII.

NOW if this be so, surely also the provision of place for the burial of bodies at the monuments of Saints must have something in it; it must be at least an argument of some good humane affection toward our friends, whose funeralls we celebrate: and if it be some kind of Religion to bury them at all, certainly to have care in what place we bury them cannot but be of like merit. But yet, when such comforts as these are procured by the living, (by which indeed their pious affection toward their deceased friend is sufficiently declared to survive) yet I say, I perceive not, for my part, any advantage coming thereby un-
to

to the dead, unlesse it be in this
 onely respect, namely, that when
 men remember where the bo-
 dies of their deceased friends
 are placed, they may in their
 prayers recommend them unto
 God more effectually by their in-
 tercession of those Saints unto
 whose patronage they may seem
 by the place of their Buriall, to
 be received; which yet also they
 might, if they pleased, very wel
 do, supposing they were not in-
 terred in such places. Neither
 are those more eminent Sepul-
 chres of the dead called *Me-*
mories or *Monuments* for any
 other reason, then because they
 do as it were, renew or preserve
 the remembrance of such per-
 sons, as are by death with-
 drawn from the common con-
 versation of men, and so hin-
 der, that they perish not alto-
 B gether

Patron-
 age of
 Saints
 profit-
 able
 when de-
 sired.

gether as much in the minds of their friends, as they seem lost to their eye. For the very name of memory imports this clearly, and a *Monument* is so called; because it *admonisheth*, or, as it were, prompteth the mind to something, which is fit to be thought on. For which reason also, the same thing which we call a *Memory* or *Monument*, the Greeks call *μνημεῖον*, from *μνήμη*, which in their language is as much as *remembrance* with us. Whensoever therefore the mind of a man remembers where the body of some dear friend is buried, if the place which comes to mind be also venerable and renown'd for the name of some Martyr, instantly without more ado the good affection of him that remembers this, in his prayers

re-

Souls recommended unto the Martyrs.

recommendeth the soul it loved
unto the same Martyr : which
 affection yet, when it is exhibit-
 ed by faithfull and dear friends
 unto people departed , they
 themselves before their de-
 parture merited, that it should
 be availeable to them : And
 therefore where necessity suf-
 fers not either that bodyes be
 buried at all , or not in such
 places as these , yet *prayer for*
the souls departed is never pre-
termitted , which the Church
 of God , as it were , ingageth
 her self to performe , at least
 under a generall Commemora-
 tion , without particular men-
 tion of names , in behalf of
 all those who are departed in
 the Christian Catholick Com-
 munion , to the intent that by
 the care of one pious & Com-
 mon Mother unto all , supply
 B 2 may

Prayer
 for the
 souls de-
 parted.

may bee made of such good offices, wherein possibly our friends, kindred, Children or parents may be defective towards us. So that indeed, in case these supplications wee speak of (which are usually done *in right faith and piety for the dead*) should bee wanting, or not made at all, I for my part suppose, it would not much profit a mans soul, to have his body buryed in a holy place.

CHAP. V.

VV Herefore (to return to our purpose) when as this faithfull Mother desired to have the body of her faithfull Child put in the Church of a Martyr, this desire of hers was a kind of prayer

prayer , for as much as shee
 beleevd *his soul might re-*
ceive help by the merits of the
Martyr. And this was that
 which profited if any thing did
 profit at all. So when the
 Mother afterwards remem-
 bers the same sepulchre , and in
 her prayers more and more in-
 stantly recommends her Sonne,
 it is not the place of the dead
 body , but the Mothers lively
 affection, (perhaps excited and
 quickened by the memory of
 the place) which *succours the*
soul of the deceased. For doubt-
 less it doth not unprofitably
 concern the religious mind
 of one that prayeth to consider
 at once , both who is recom-
 mended , and to whom he is
 recommended . Even as we
 see men that pray , do com-
 monly so dispose the members

Souls re-
 ceiving
 help by
 the me-
 rits of
 the Mar-
 tyr.

S. Aug.
 assures
 us that
 prayer
 for the
 dead is
 very pro-
 fitable; though
 he was
 not cer-
 tain whi-
 ther the
 buriall
 in any
 particu-
 lar place be
 so availa-
 ble , yet
 he much
 encourag-
 eth to
 that al-
 so, and
 proveth
 it very
 strongly.

of their body, as usually is most proper and effectually for suppliants to do, as when they bend their knees, when they spread their hands, when they prostrate their bodies on the ground, or do any other visible action of that nature; although, I say, their invisible will and hearts intention be known well enough unto God, who needs none of these signs to make him see what is in the heart of man, yet certainly the man who prayeth, doth move himself to pray, to lament, to grieve by such motions and postures as those, much more humbly, much more fervently and devoutly then otherwise he would. Yea, and how it comes to pass I know not, seeing these motions of the body are not made but by some precedent motion

motion of the mind .yet certain it is , that by these externall actions visibly done, that other invisible motion which caused them , is reciprocally increased, and by this means that affection of mind which preceded those Actions as the cause of them, is it self also increased, because they are done : and yet notwithstanding, when it happens that a man is held in such sort, or perhaps tyed by constraint , that he cannot so dispose his corporall members as willingly he would, his interior man ceaseth not therefore to pray, nor yet to prostrate himself before Almighty God in the more secret Cabinet of a contrite heart.

In like manner truly it much imports, where a man can place the dead body of him , for

Observe
this, that
it much
imports
even
wherthe
body is
interred.

Rest of
the souls
to bee
procured
even
after
death.

whose soul he intends to supplicate almighty God; because both his precedent affection did chuse an holy place, and also having put the body there, the remembrance of the same place revives and increases that affection which preceded it. But neverthelesse a religious friend being determined to give buriall to him whom he loveth, although he cannot perhaps obtain to bury him where he would, yet let him not by any means forbear necessary prayers in his recommendation: for whatsoever becometh of the dead body, *the Rest of his soul must be procured*: which soul of his, when it left the body, carried its sense along with it, by which is distinguished in what condition every one is after death, whither good or evil.

euil. Nor doth the spirit of man after departure expect, that its life should be any way relieved now by that flesh, to which it self, when time was, afforded life; which life at the hour of death it carried away with it self, and shall restore again, when it returns. For this is certain, the flesh procures not the merit of Resurrection to the spirit but the spirit to the flesh, whither it revives unto pain or glory.

CHAP. VI.

WE read in the Chronicles of the Church, which *Ensebins* wrote in Greek, and after him *Ruffinus* translated into Latine, that the bodies of some Martyrs in *France* were thrown unto dogs,

and that what the dogs left of them together with their very bones was afterwards consumed with fire, and the ashes cast into the river *Rhosne*; so that not the least part of them could remain for memory. Which we cannot imagine was permitted by the Divine Providence for any other reason, then to teach Christians, that by them, who for the honour and Confession of Christ do despise their own lives, the want of buriall after death is least of all to be regarded. For out of all doubt this thing, which was executed with so great cruelty upon the Martyrs bodies, would never have been suffered by God, if the victorious Souls themselves could thereby have been hindered of their Crowns and rest. Hence therefore it is
clearly

clearly manifest, that our Lord
 saying *Fear not those who kill*
the body, and have no more to
do, meant not, that men should
 act nothing upon the bodies of
 his servants deceased, as well
 as living, but that whatsoever
 they should be suffered to do,
 nothing should be done, that
 might disturb their happinesse,
 nothing that should affect
 them with any sense of grief,
 nothing that should hinder the
 perfect resurrection and restau-
 ration of their bodies in due
 time.

CHAP. VII.

ALL which notwithstanding, by reason of that naturall and inbred affection which is in men, in respect whereof it is said that *no man ever hated his own flesh*, if they perceive that any thing be likely after their death to be wanting unto their bodies, which the solemnity of funerall would require at least according to the custome of the country and place where they live, we see, they cannot forbear to be sad like men, and solicitous for that provision touching their bodies before death, of which, when they are once dead, they shall not be sensible at all. Yea so far doth this extend, that in the book of *Kings*

we read, how God Almighty himself by one Prophet threatneth another, who had transgressed his command, that his body should not be buried in the Sepulchre of his Fathers. The words of Scripture are these. *Thus saith our Lord,* 3 Reg. 13.31.
Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of our Lord,
and hast not kept the Commandment which our Lord thy
God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten
bread, and drank water, in the place in which our Lord
commanded thee not to eat bread, nor drink water, thy
carcase shall not be brought into the sepulchre of thy
Fathers. Which punishment, if we consider it according to
the Gospel, where (as hath been often said) we are taught
not

not to fear, after our departure, any thing that may be done to our dead members, it will scarce seem to be any punishment at all: but if we reflect upon that humane affection, which all men naturally bear to their own flesh, a man can hardly choose but be contristated, even while he liveth, for that, which when he is dead, he shall not feel. In this respect therefore it was a punishment unto the Prophet, that he could not forbear to grieve at present, for that which should afterward befall his body, though when it should indeed befall, he were sure enough to have no sense of it. For the will of our Lord doubtlesse was to chastise his servant thus far onely, who had transgressed his command, not so much by any
par-

particular pravity of his own will, as through the fallacy of another who deceived him, and made him think he had obeyed the command of God, when he did not. And it were very hard to think otherwise, as that his body being killed by the tearings of that beast, his soul should also be plucked away at the same time to the torments of hell. No, we see the Lyon which killed him became instantly his Guardian, and defended his body from the ravening of other beasts, yea the very Asse on which he rode, remained untouched, seeming to assist as it were, with an undaunted presence, at the Funeralls of his Master; which certainly was not without miracle, and an evident sign that the man of God in
that

1 Cor.
11.31.

that case was corrected onely unto a temporall death, and not at all punished afterward: not much unlike to that passage of the Apostle, where having commemorated the infirmities, yea deaths of many of the people, for some particular offenses among them, he concludes at last thus, *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged by our Lord, but when we are judged, we are chastized by our Lord lest we should be condemned with the world.* And truly he who had deceived this Prophet, buried him afterward in his own monument with sufficient honour, yea and took order beside, that himself might be afterwards buried as near as might be unto his corps, hoping, (as we may probably suppose) that
by

by this means his own bones might be spared, when the time should come, according to the prophesie of this very man of God, that the good King *Josias* should cause the bones of many dead people to be disinterred, and those idolatrous altars which had been built unto strange Gods, in and about Hierusalem, to be defiled therewith. For so indeed it came to passe : The Monument wherein this Prophet was buried, who foretold those things three hundred years before, and the Sepulchre of him who deceived him, were spared. And so we see, out of that naturall affection by which every man loves his own flesh, this Prophet was carefull to provide for the temporall security of his body even after death,

who

4 Reg.
23. 18.

who yet by a lye (so much as in him lay) cared not to hazard his soul for ever. In this respect therefore, that every one naturally loveth his own flesh, it was some kind of punishment for the one to know, that he should not come to be buried in the Sepulchre of his fathers ; and in the other (if that had been all) a providence not unworthy of commendation, *viz.* to lay his bones in a Sepulchre, which he was sure none would violate.

CHAP. VIII.

THe Martyrs indeed, while they fought for the truth, vanquished this affection; and it was no marvell they should: for they who could not be overcome with any torments they suffered alive, it had been very strange, should they have shrunk at any thing which was to follow after death, whereof they should have no sense. Doubtlesse God Almighty, who suffered not the Lyon so much as to touch the Prophet after he was dead, but as it were commanded him to gard that body which he had slain, could as easily, if he had so pleased, have kept off thole doggs from the bodies of his servants, he could have terrified

fied by a hundred wayes the
 cruell minds of those people,
 that they should not have da-
 red either to burn their bodies,
 or to throw about their ashes.
 But this was a tryall of those
 Saints not fit to be wanting to
 the rest of their sufferings, that
 the fortitude of their Confessi-
 on, which was already well
 seen in not yielding to any tor-
 tures to save their life, might
 yet be consummated as it were,
 and perfected in this, that for
 Christs sake they regarded as
 little the honour of Sepulture,
 remaining through their Faith
 in the Resurrection, as secure of
 their bodies, as they were of
 their souls. And for this rea-
 son also it was fit that such
 things should be permitted to
 be done, that the Martyrs
 themselves by such glorious
 com-

combats should become fervent witnesses of that Truth, which from our Saviour they had learned, namely, That they which thus cruelly tyrannized over their bodies, after death *had no more to do*; seeing that whatsoever they should attempt upon the bodies once dead would be nothing: nothing I say, either in respect of the soul, which onely hath sense, and was already departed; or in respect of God the Creatour, whose providence is such, as nothing can be lost which he hath made. And yet notwithstanding, while these Martyrs themselves with infinite courage suffered such things, not caring (for the love of Christ) what became of their bodies dead or alive; their fellow-brethren, the
rest

rest of the Christians had great sorrow at the same time, were much afflicted, that by reason hereof and of the extream vigilance of their persecutours, they could not perform the honours of their funeralls, no not so much as to procure privately the least Relick of them, as the same history sheweth. So as, when no evil at all touched them who were killed, either that their bodies were torn in pieces, or their bones burnt, or their ashes cast abroad, yet in the living we see, there was much sorrow and affliction, because they were not able to do that for their friends, which this naturall affection seemed to require: that is, there was in them a great deal of sense for that, of which the dead had no sense, and much compassion,

Christi-
ans in
old times
used dili-
gence to
get any
small re-
licks of
Saints,

as I may so say, where indeed was no Passion at all.

CHAP. IX.

According unto which kind of *miserable compassion*, as it may be called, we reade, those men were highly commended by King *David*, who had buried, that is, shewed ^{a Reg 2.} such pity unto the dry bones of ^{5.} *Saul* and *Jonathan*. But can any pity be shewen to them who have no sense of misery? Or shall we say, that this agreeth with the opinion of *Virgil*, that deceased people cannot passe that river of Hell, cannot come at the Elysian fields, nor be at rest, till their bodies be buried? God forbid that Christianity should admit such a Paradox. If that
were

were true, millions of Martyrs were in a miserable case, whose bodies were never buried, yea and the Truth it self had much deceived them, saying, *Fear not them who kill the body, and afterward have no more to do,* if they could do them so great mischief yet after death, as to hinder their passe unto their desired rest. But seeing this is so undoubtedly false, and that for certain the want of buryall hurteth faithfull souls no more, then it doth advantage an infidell to be buried sumptuously, what may the reason then be, that the good and religious King *David* should so highly commend them, who buried *Saul* and his son? Certainly it was nothing but this, *viz.* the good affection, with which their hearts were touched, who
 buried

buried them, and that it seemed to be affliction to them, that such calamity should befall the bodies of others, as out of that naturall love which all men bear to themselves, they would never wish to their own; and that they were content, yea studious, while they lived, and knew what they did, to exhibite those good offices to others, though unsensible of them, which they would be glad should be performed to themselves afterward, when they also should be past all sense.

C

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

BUt there are certain visions recounted, which may seem to move no inconsiderable doubt in this point. For they say, that sundry deceased persons have been known to appear unto the living, not only in their sleep, but otherwise, and to tell their friends, who were otherwise ignorant of it, in what places their bodies lay unburied, seeming to desire, that those duties which were wanting might be performed towards them. Now if we should say that these things were false, we might be thought to use more boldnesse then became us, both in regard of the writings of some faithfull Christians who report it, as
also

also in regard of the testimony and sensible experience of those to whom such visions have happened. We shall answer therefore, that it follows not, that the dead have any sense at all of what is done to their bodies, because they seem to speak, to declare or desire such and such things of men in their sleep. For even the living many times appear unto the living while they sleep, when themselves know not that they do appear, and afterward hear men relate with great confidence the things which they dreamed, affirming that such and such things they saw them, that is to say, their friends that should appear to them, do or speak in their sleep. If therefore, for instance sake, it be possible for a man to see me in

his sleep, telling him, that some such thing is done, or shall be done, my self in the mean time not knowing nor perceiving any such thing, yea so little regarding what he dreams, that I neither know nor care, whether such a person sleeps when I wake, or waketh when I sleep, or whither it happens not, that we sleep or wake both of us at that same time, when he suppoſeth he sees me in his sleep: if I say, this be possible, what wonder is it if the dead, without any reall sense or knowledge of such things themselves, should also be seen of the living, yea and tell them something, which when they wake they may find to be true. I rather think indeed that all this is done by the ministry of some Angels, whither by

divine

divine permission onely or
 command, that they signifie
 such things unto men by way
 of vision, touching the burying
 of those bodies, whose spirits
 at that time know not any
 thing what becomes of their
 bodies. For this doubtlesse is
 not altogether unprofitably
 done, whither we regard the
 comfort of the living, to whom
 those dead people belong,
 whose Ghosts do seem thus to
 appear, or the office of buriall
 it self, which is matter of so
 commendable charity even to
 mankind in generall, that al-
 though the dead receive no
 particular comfort thereby, yet
 it cannot be wholly neglected
 without offence of Religion;
 sometimes indeed men are
 much misled by fallacious and
 imaginary visions, but they are

most commonly such, as deserve justly to be so deluded: as for example, when any one sees in his dreams such things as Æneas is reported to have met with in his imaginary travels through hell, and that the Ghost of some unburied person should appear to him, begging the same things of him, which Palinurus is fabled to have done of Æneas, that is to say, the interring of his corps, and that when he awakes he should indeed find the body in such a place as was told him in his dream; if because he finds thus much of his dream to be true, he should fall to think, that therefore mens bodies are buried, that the souls thereby may passe unto those places of rest, to which otherwise by the law of Hell they could

could not passe, who doubts but that this man should grossly deceive himself, and deviate from the Truth?

CHAP. XI.

YET such is the generall infirmity of men that when at any time they happen to have a vision in their sleep of any dead person presently they imagine the very soul of such a man appears to them; when as at the same time, if they happen to dream of one, or see one that is alive, they never take it either for body or soul, but as it is indeed, for a meer similitude of such a man appearing to them; as if perchance it were not altogether as possible, for the similitudes of souls, as well as of bodies, (in the absence

of the souls themselves & without their knowledge thereof) to be presented to men in their dreams.

This, which I am about to tell, when I was at *Millain*, I heard reported for certain. A certain debt was demanded of one by virtue of a writing under his deceased fathers hand, which debt had been discharged by the Father living, his sonne not knowing thereof, nor yet how to make it appear that it was discharged: he was therefore much troubled and perplexed at it, wondring why his Father at his death, and at the making of his Testament should not acquaint him with that debt. Being thus in perplexity, his Father in his sleep appears to him, and tels him where he should find the discharge

charge of that debt recorded ;
 which the sonne accordingly
 seeking found and produced ,
 and thereby not onely voided
 the Action of debt, which was
 unjustly brought against him ,
 but also recovered the writing
 it self ; which his Father when
 he paid the mony, did not re-
 member to take out : In this
 case therefore it cannot but
 seem , that the soul of the
 Father had a care of his sonne,
 by coming to him and telling
 him matter of importance ,
 which himself knew not of, and
 thereby delivering him from a
 great deal of trouble. But at
 the same time that I heard this,
 namely while I stayed at *Mil-*
lain , there happened at *Car-*
thage something which makes
 me doubt: it was this. *Enlogius*
 the Rhetorician there, one who

had been formerly my scholar
 in that Art, (as himself told
 me the story afterwards, when
 I was come again into *Africk*)
 was reading to his Scholars
Tullies books of Rhetorick,
 and perusing the lesson or place
 which he was to expound
 publickly the next day in the
 Schools, he met with one ob-
 scure passage in it, which he
 could not possibly understand,
 and was therefore very much
 perplexed about it, yea could
 take no rest all that night, till,
 as he said, I my self appeared
 to him and told him the mean-
 ing of it: yet certainly not I
 my self, but some image or si-
 militude of me; for I knew no-
 thing of the businesse, I was far
 from him on the other side of
 the sea, busied about other af-
 fairs, had no thoughts, no care,
 not.

not so much as dream'r, what
 my Schölar might be doing.
 Now how these things come to
 passe, I confesse I know not,
 yet which way soever they do,
 why may we not think, that
 the appearances of the dead
 and living both, are, as it
 were, much one and the same,
 effected in one and the same
 manner, and by one and the
 same means, that is, neither the
 living nor the dead knowing
 at all, when themselves or
 their similitudes do so appear.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

NOr unlike unto dreams
 are the visions which
 some have both living and wa-
 king, namely those who are
 troubled in their mind, frantick
 or distempered people ; for
 such many times we observe
 talking to themselves as unto
 companions, sometimes with
 such as are absent, as if they
 were present, and with the
 dead as if they were alive, and
 this by reason of the *Idea's* or
 forms of such persons or things
 as by accident get into their
 fancy. But even as the living
 themselves in such cases, know
 not that they seem to appear
 and speak unto such persons,
 who through distemper of
 mind do conceive themselves
 to

to see and hear them; (for in reality sure they are neither present with them, nor talking to them, but onely the poor men have such phantasms in their head which trouble them,) so also is it, when they imagine themselves to talk or converse with any that be dead; for the dead come not at them, nor do they know whither such people think of them yea or no.

And like unto this is also another case of some people, who seem, as it were, to be abstracted from themselves, and more deprived of their bodily senses, then they should be, if they onely slept, yet in the mean time entertained with strange visions. For unto such also appear the similitudes of lying and dead men: and
when

when they come again to their senses, if they report that they saw any of the dead, men are apt to believe that in their extasies they were really with those dead, not considering how at the same time, upon their report, they also saw others which were alive, and far enough distant from them, and no way thinking of them, as I shall shew you by one notable example. A certain ordinary person of *Tally's* incorporation, which is nigh unto *Hippo*, one *Carina* by name, a poor Officer in that place, and scarce got into the rank of a *Dramvir*, and an absolute rustick beside, fell sick, had his senses quite taken from him, and lay for some dayes in a manner dead, yet some little breath remain-
ing.

ing in him, which could hardly be perceived by laying ones finger to his nostrills, yet it served for some slender token of life, so as he was not buried as one absolutely dead; he stirred not one member of his body, received no kind of sustenance all that while, perceived no body, either by sight or any other sense, what pain soever they laboured to put him to; yet in his vision he saw many things, which at length after many dayes awaking he reported. And first of all upon the very opening of his eyes, *Let some body,* quoth he, *go to Curina the Smiths house and see what's to do there;* whither when the messenger came, that *Curina*, viz. the Smith, was found to be dead, in that very moment when
this

this other returned to his senses, seeming, as it were, to be restored from death to life. Then he told those who stood about him, that *Cyrina* the Smith was commanded to appear at the very time, that himself was discharged, and that when he was dismissed, in the place from whence he came, he heard it said, that not *Cyrina* the Officer, but *Cyrina* the Smith was the man commanded to be brought unto those places of the dead. In this extasie therefore of his, as in a vision, he may seem to have conversed with the dead, yea to have seen them *treated*, as doubtlesse they are, according to *their severall merits*. And truly perhaps I should have thought my self, he had conversed with the very souls
of

of the dead, if he had not also seen in that vision sundry which are yet alive, namely, some Churchmen of his own Countrey, by the Priest whereof he was told, that at *Hippo* he should be baptized by me, which accordingly, he said, was done. Wherefore in that vision, it is clear, he saw both a Priest, certain of the Clergy, my self; none of us all as yet dead, as well as he saw those that were dead. Why then might he not see us all both dead and living, after one manner, that is, not present but absent, not knowing, but ignorant of what he saw, in a word, not in our persons, but in our similitudes, even as he did the places also? For he saw the Field where the Priest was, he saw
not

not only the Clarks , but the whole City of *Hippo* it self, where he was Baptized ; in which places yet certainly he was not , for he knew nothing of what was done at *Hippo* all that time , which he would have done doubtlesse , if indeed he had been there. All this therefore was but by the way of vision, wherein things passe not alwayes in themselves or in verity of their substance, but are represented in Image or Similitude onely. Lastly, after many other things which he saw , he told how he was taken up into Paradise , and that it was said to him, when he was dismissed and ready to return to his friends, Go , Be Baptized , if ever you will live in this place of the Blessed ; and when they told him
fur-

further, that he must be Baptized by me, he answered, it was done already, but hee who communed with him replied, *Go, saith he, and be Baptized indeed, for all this thou hast seen but in vision.*

After this, the man recovered and came to *Hippo*. Easter approaching he delivered in his name among the rest of the *Competents*, unknown to me, and not much caring, as it seems, to tell his Vision, either to my self or any about me. But Baptized he was, and when the Holy-dayes were over, he went home again to his own, and a year or two it was, before I understood any of these particulars, which I first learned from a friend of mine and his, sitting at table together and discoursing

sing of such matters. There-
 upon I became my self in-
 quisitive concerning the busi-
 nesse, and caused him to
 make relation of the whole
 matter to my self in presence
 of many honest men, his
 fellow Citizens, who them-
 selves testified the strange
 sicknesse which he had, and
 that for the space of many
 dayes he lay as one dead, and
 what happened to that other
Cyrina the Smith; and
 when he repeated all things,
 as I have related, his neigh-
 bours that stood by, re-
 membred and testified that
 they had heard the same
 things from him before.
 Wherefore, as he saw his
 own Baptizing, and me, and
 the City of *Hippo*, the Church
 and the Font, not in the
 things

things themselves, or their
very substance, but by cer-
tain similitudes, so also did
he see many other persons
alive, which neither knew nor
had thought of him.

C H A P.

CHAP. XIII.

VVHy then might he not see those deceased persons (which he saw) not in their own persons or substances, but in representation onely, they themselves neither seeing nor conversing with him? Why shall we not say, that such things as these may be the operations of some Angels by order of the divine providence, who is pleased to use both the good and bad (yet both well) according to the unsearchable depth of his Judgments, whither mens minds be thereby instructed or deceived, whither they be comforted or troubled, according as every one is capable of punishment or favour from him

Angels
appear
to the
living.

him whose *Mercy and Judgement both* his Church worthily celebrateth? But let every man judge of this as he thinks best. Certainly, if the souls of the dead could be so present in the affaires of the living, and converse with us, as they seem to do sometimes in our sleep; not to speak of others, my own deare Mother would not forbear me one night, who while she lived, followed me both by Sea and Land to enjoy my company: for God forbid, that by being Blessed herself, she should be now less tender-hearted towards me, that she should not, when any thing afflicts my heart, comfort her son as she used to do, whom, when time was, she loved with most singular affection, and could never endure

to see him grieved. But surely that is most true, which the-
 Psal. 126. Psalmist saith, namely *That*
 10. *my Father and Mother have forsaken me, yet our Lord hath taken me up.* If then (as the Scripture saith) our Fathers have forsaken us, how are they present with our affayres? how know they our cares? And if our Fathers themselves are not present, do not know our affairs, what are those other dead, which should know them? Isaias the Prophet
 Isa 63. 16. saith, *Thou art our Father, because Abraham is ignorant of us and Israel knows us not.* If such great Patriarch's were ignorant of what was done touching the people of their own posterity, yea to whom for their faith in God that people and posterity were especially

cially promised, who can think that the dead generally do mixe themselves or meddle one way or other in the affaires of the living? in what sense can we say, it was happy for them who dyed before such or such evils happened, if even after death they were to be sensible of the calamities of the times? or shall we peradventure say, that the errour is on our part, who will needs suppose them to be at rest, whom yet the restless or calamitous lifes of others here do indeed continually disquiet? But if so, what then would be the meaning, what speciall favour in that promise which God Almighty made unto the good King Josias, namely that hee should dy before, that he should not

D

live

live to see the evils which were threatned unto that place and people? The words of God are these. Thus saith our Lord the God of Israel, my words which thou hast heard, and didst tremble before my face when thou heardest what I speak against this place and against the Inhabitants thereof, that it should be forsaken, and become a Curse, and hast rent thy cloaths and wept before me; I also have heard, saith our Lord, it shall not be: Behold I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt be placed in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evils which I will bring upon this place and the Inhabitants thereof. This good King was terrified with the threatnings of God Almighty,

mighty , had wept and tore his garments , and is therefore as to his own person , secured against all those calamities which were to come , by the promise of a timely death before they came , and that he should so rest in peace , that none of all those evils should touch him . Therefore certain it is , that the Spirits of men departed are there , where they neither know nor feel the accidents of this life . How then do they visit their own sepulchres ? how can they know whither their bodies be buried or unburied ? how can we make them partake of the miseries of the living ? Seeing if they be bad , they have enough to suffer of their own : if otherwise , they rest in peace ,

(as the good King Josias was to doe) having no sense of evill at all, either in the way of passion or compassion, but as absolutely free and discharged of whatsoever concernes this world.

CHAP. XIV.

BUt perhaps some will say,
 If the dead have no care
 for the living, why did that
 rich Glutton in the Gospell, Luc. 16.
 being himself in hell, pray
 Father Abraham to send La-
 zarus unto his five Brethren
 yet living in the world, and to
 deale with them, so as they
 might not come to that place
 of torment? But must we needs
 think that because *Dives* sayd
 thus, that therefore he did know
 at that time what his Brethren
 did, or how their state was?
 no verily, but we may think
 his care of the living (though
 he knew not particularly what

they did) was such, as our care for the dead is, who know not certainly eyther what they do, or where they are and yet we have some kinde of care of them; for if we had not, certainly *we should never pray for them.* Neyther did Abraham send Lazarus unto them, but replied, *they have Moyſes and the Prophets*, whom they ought to follow, to the end they came not into those places of torment. And if you object, how could Abraham himself know that they had Moyſes & the Prophets, if the dead know nothing of the affayres of the world after death (for Moyſes and the Prophets were all after A^hraham :) & how could he know that by observing the precepts of Moyſes and the
Pro-

Prophets men might escape hell, yea how could he know that this Dives had lived all his life long in ryot and pleasures, and poore Lazarus in paynes? for so he tells him plainly, *Son remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life, and Lazarus likewise evill*: if I say you conclude, that therefore Abraham, though dead, must needs know many things done among the living; I shall answer he did certainly know them, yet not then when they were a doing, or perhaps but newly done in the world, but afterwards, as he might by sundry wayes, and particularly the state of Dives and Lazarus he knew, not when Dives and Lazarus lived in the world, but afterwards

D 4. when.

when they were both dead,
 hee might learn it of Laza-
 rus; least otherwise that which
 the Prophet saith might seem
 not to hold true, viz. that
Abraham knoweth us not.

CHAP. XV.

He de-
 clares
 how ma-
 ny wayes
 the dead
 may
 come to
 know
 what is
 done in
 this
 world, &
 what
 things
 they
 know.

THerefore indeed it must
 be confessed that the dead
 know not what is done here;
 but this to be understood only
 while it is, as it were, a doing
 here, or but newly done, for
 afterwards, as I sayd, they
 may understand it, namely by
 those who dying depart from
 hence unto them; but yet not
 all things whatsoever, but
 those only which they are per-
 mitted

mitted to disclose, yea which they are permitted to remember, and may be necessary for others to know. The dead also may understand something from those Angels, whose office is to attend the affaires of this world, according as he sees good and expedient for them to know, to whom all things are subject. For unless there were some Angels, which conversed both with the dead and the living, our Lord Jesus would not have sayd, *it came to pass that the beggar dyed and was carryed of the Angels into Abrahams bosome.* Therefore they could be now here, now there, seeing as God would have it, they were used to carry him from hence unto the place of

his rest. The souls of the dead also may know some things by divine Revelation, either of such things as be necessary for them to know, or at least not necessary to be unknown, and this not only of things past or present, but of those also which are to come, even as in times past not all men in generall were made acquainted with the Secrets of God, but only Prophets and such other holy men while they lived, and they not every one of them knowing all things, but every one some, according as the Divine Providence was pleased to reveale. And that some of the dead also may be sent unto the living, the Scripture it self doth testifie, (as contrarily S. Paul from among the
 Living

Living was rapt up into Paradise) for so we read, the Prophet Samuel after he was dead, appeared unto King Saul yet living, and foretold him things to come. 'Tis true, there are some that say, it was not Samuel himself that appeared, who could not, they think, have been so fetcht up with magicall charmes, but rather some evill Spirit ready and apt for such business borrowed his shape. But the book we call Ecclesiasticus, written as 'tis commonly said by Jesus the Son of Sirach, but for resemblance of stile and eloquence not unlike to be Solomons own work, in the praises of holy men sayes of Samuel, that *being dead he Prophecied*: But if again you extenuate the
 autho-

Denti
34. 5.

authority of this book with the Jewes (because they say it is not in their Canon) yet at least concerning Moyses no doubt can be made, but that in Deuteronomy he is related to be both dead and buried, and yet in the Gospell to have appeared unto the living, together with Elias, who as yet is not dead.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Hence alſo we answer an
 other question, *viz*, what
 may be ſaid of the Martyrs,
who by the favours which are
granted unto ſuch as pray unto
them do declare themſelves
 both to underſtand and to have
 care of our affairs, if the dead
 know not at all what the liv-
 ing do? for 'tis certain, and we
 know it by report of witneſſes
 beyond exception, that when
 the City of *Nola* was beſiedg-
 ed by the *Barbarians*, the Bleſ-
 ſed Confeſſour *Felix*, not onely
 by the effects of his particular
 favours, but even perſonally
 and in plain view did appear
 unto many good people inha-
 biting that City, whom he had
 for-

7 favours
 obtained
 by pray-
 er to
 Saints.

Saints
 appear
 miracu-
 louſly
 ſome-
 times
 when in-
 vocated,

formerly dearly loved. But it must be said, that such things as those happen miraculously, and are farre different from the usuall course, which God hath appointed unto the nature of all sorts of things. For because our Lord turned once water into wine, we must not therefore forget what the nature of water is, and what its proper virtue in the order of elements is, nor because *Lazarus* rose again from death, that therefore every man that dyeth may rise again when he will, or that a dead man is raised by no greater power, then another is awakened out of sleep. For to speak according to the limits and condition of mans nature in it self is one thing, and to speak according as God is pleas-

pleased to demonstrate his divine power in it is another: and the things which come to passe naturally and as it were by constant course are of one sort, and those which are done miraculously by God are of another; yet is God alwayes assistant unto nature, without whom it could not be, and in miracles themselves nature is not absolutely excluded, because at least *in her* though not *by her* they are wrought. We must not therefore imagine, that the dead do ordinarily and of course mix themselves in the affairs of the living, because the Martyrs do sometimes shew themselves present, for the curing or help of some particular persons: But rather we are to know, it is by divine power of privi-

How miracles
are
wrought
by praying
to
Saints.

Here he
inquires
the man-
ner how
miracles
are ob-
teined
by pray-
ing to
Saints.

priviledge & dispensation that the Martyrs themselves are present with us at any time, because the dead generally & by any vertue of their own nature cannot be so. Although I confesse to determine in what particular manner the Martyrs do help them, *who for certain are helped by the Martyrs*, is a matter farre above my capacity: that is to say, whether the Martyrs be present in their own persons at the same time in so divers and farre distant places as their *Memories* are, or that they otherwise happen to shew themselves: or whether that God Almighty, the Martyrs abiding alwayes in that place which is *appointed for their merits*, farre remote from the conversation of men.

men, yet praying generally for the necessities of those *who pray unto them*, in the same manner as *we pray for the dead* (to whom we are never present, nor know where they be, or what they do) or I say, whether that God Almighty himself, who is every where present, though not as joyned to us nor as divided from us, hearing the prayers which the Martyrs make, doth by the ministry of Angels, which he sends abroad into all places, exhibit such comforts unto people against the miseries of this life, as he seeth to be most expedient, who by his wonderfull power and goodnesse giveth *testimony unto the merits of his Martyrs* both where, and when, and how he pleaseth, but

Merits
of the
Martyrs
acknow-
ledged
by S.
Austin.

The Me-
mory
and me-
diation
of Saints
expedi-
ent for
confir-
mation
of faith.

but chiefly *at their memories*, as knowing this in his divine wildome, to be most expedient for the Confirmation and Exaltation of the Faith of Christ, for which the Martyrs suffered. This I say is a thing much higher then I can reach unto, more abstruse and difficult then I can search out; and therefore which of the two it be, or whither perhaps both of the may not be true, *viz.* that sometimes by the very presence of the Martyrs themselves, and sometimes again by Angels personating the Martyrs these things may be done, I dare not determine: I desire rather to learn such things of those who know them; For some there are surely who do know them, as there be some others

others also perhaps, who think they do, but do not. For doubtlesse such things as these are the *Free Gifts* of God, who liberally bestoweth them as he pleaseth, some to one, some to another, according to that of the Apostle saying *The manifestation of the spirit is given* 1 Cor. 12. 7, &c. to every one for their profit. To one saith he, is given by the spirit the word of wisdom: and to another the word of knowledge according to the same spirit. To another saith in the same spirit: to another the grace of doing cures in one spirit: to another working of miracles; to another kinds of tongues; to another prophesie; to another discerning of spirits; to another interpretation of tongues. And all these

these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to every one according as he will. Of all which spirituall Gifts reckoned up by the Apostle, he that hath the discerning of spirits, he onely is the man who knoweth the things we speak of, as they ought to be known.

CHAP. XVII.

ANd such most probably
 was that Holy Person
John the Monk, whom the
 good Emperour *Theodosius*
 the Elder was pleased to con-
 sult concerning the event of
 the civill war: for this man
 had also the gift of Prophecie;
 as I doubt not concerning *those*
gifts but as every one might
 have any one in particular
 and alone, 'so, as it pleased
 God, some one had many; as
 this *John* for example, of whom
 it is recounted, that a certain
 woman very devout and reli-
 gious, being as it were passio-
 nately desirous to see him, and
 labouring by her husband to
 procure it some way or other
 with

How S.
 Aug. re-
 verenced
 monks.

with the Holy man, it not being his manner to admit the conversation of women upon any terms, he refused, but yet *Go*, saith he, *tell your wife she shall see me at night, but it shall be in her sleep*; and so she did. The good man appeared to her, and instructed her in all the duties of a faithfull wife, as she her self, as soon as she did awake, told her husband, describing the man of God to him, in such form and shape as he knew him to have. This truly I have heard reported by one, who had it from the parties themselves, a grave and honourable personage, and worthy, I think, of all credit. But as to the matter, if I my self had ever seen that Saintly Monk, (as report

The
manner
how apparitions
are made

report of him, that he was a man of most sweet conversation, and wont most patiently to hear what men propounded to him, and most wisely to give answer) I would have enquired of him something pertaining to this question, that is, Whither himself, or (which is all one) his spirit in the figure of his body did indeed come unto that woman in her sleep, in such manner as we men dream of our selves in the shape of our bodies ; or else that himself being otherwise busied, or sleeping, yea perhaps dreaming too, this vision happened to the woman by an Angel or by some other means, and that he *by the spirit of prophecy* knowing before-hand when such a vision should

should be vouchsafed unto her, was pleased by a kind of promise thereof, to gratifie the desires of that good woman. For if himself in person were present at the time of that vision, certainly it was by speciall, nay by wonderfull grace and priviledge, that he so was, not by nature, or any proper faculty of his own. And whether the woman saw him personally and really present or no, yet surely something of like nature it was, to that we reade of in the *Acts of the Apostles* concerning *Saul*, of whom our Lord *Iesus* speaking to *Ananias* tells him, that *Saul* had seen *Ananias* coming to him, &c. when as *Ananias* himself as yet knew not *Saul*. nor any thing of the businesse. Yea
and

AG. 9.
11.

and which way soever of these that man of God should have answered me, I would yet have proceeded further with him concerning the Martyrs, and asked him, in what manner it is that they are present, either in mens sleep or otherwise, to such persons as have the favour to see them sometimes, viz. when and how they please, and chiefly how they are present, when devils in mens bodies do cry out, confessing that they are tormented by them, and do beseech the Martyrs to spare them; or whether such things be done indeed and immediately by Angelicall powers only, yet in the honour and commendation of Martyrs, as God is pleased to command, for the good of us men, the Martyrs

E them-

Why
God Al-
mighty
dispens-
eth his
favours
at the
memory
and in-
tercessi-
on of
Martyrs.

themselves in the mean time remaining in perfect rest, attending wholly unto an other and much better vision, wherein though separated from us, yet their charities cease not to pray for us.

Devils
torment-
ed by the
relics of
Martyrs.

Saints li-
ving ab-
sent tor-
ment de-
vils in
possessed
bodies.

For of a truth at the Martyrs *S. Gervasius* and *Protasius* in Millain, the devils did expressly and by name confesse (besides sundry persons that were deceased) Saint *Ambrose* Bishop of the place, who was then alive, and entreated that he would spare them, yet was he at that time busied elsewhere about other matters and knew nothing of that which passed. Now supposing these things to be done, sometimes as I have said, by the Martyrs themselves present, and some-
times

times by the presence of Angels, by what signs they may be discerned or distinguished the one from the other, none I suppose, can certainly know or determine, but he onely who hath *the proper gift* thereof, which *gift* is distributed unto every one who hath it, by the Spirit of God, according as himself pleaseth. That holy man *John*, 'tis very like would have satisfied me in all these points; at least thus far, that either by his teaching me I should have learnt, and perceived the things I heard to be true, or else not being able to perceive them my self, I should yet believe them upon his credit, who did both know them, and affirm them to be so. Nay, if perchance he should answer

A wonderfull
humility
in S. Aug.
mixed
with
great
Christi-
an piety.

me out of holy Scripture, and
 say *Enquire not of things too*
high for thee, search not after
things that be too hard, but
what our Lord hath command-
ed thee, think on that alwayes,
 yet even this also I should
 take in good part. For surely,
 there being many things so
 obscure and intricate, that we
 can hardly expect to attain
 them perfectly in this life, it
 should be no small advantage,
 but to know clearly and cer-
 tainly that they are not to be
 enquired further after: as when
 a man studies hard to learn
 a thing, which he supposeth per-
 haps will be much for his pro-
 fit, yet I think it doth him no
 harm, when an other man
 rightly informs him, how to
 do as well without it.

C H A P.

CHAP. XVIII.

TO conclude therefore,
 things standing thus as
 hath been said, we are not to i-
 magine that any thing we do
 for the dead doth profit them,
 save that onely which we beg
 for them of Almighty God,
 by the sacrifices which we
 make to him on their behalf,
 that is to say, *by the Holy*
Sacrifice of the Altar, by
Almes, or by our own pray-
ers: yea even these advantage
 not all for whom they are
 made, but such onely, whose
 former life hath deserved
 that such good offices should
 profit them after death. But
 because we our selves discern
 not certainly among the dead,
 who

Masse,
 Almes,
 and
 Prayer
 profita-
 ble for
 the dead
 accord-
 to S.
 Austin.
 Prayers
 and Mas-
 ses for
 the dead
 profit
 onely
 such who
 died in
 Gods
 Grace.

A pious
and pru-
dent dis-
course.

who are such, and who are not such, it is thought more expedient to do these things in generall *for all the faithfull departed*, to the intent that none be omitted to whom such favours may of right belong. For it is much better, if it so fall out, that something superfluous be done in regard of those who receive neither good nor harm by them, then that any thing necessary should be wanting to those who have need. Howbeit every man performeth these things with more diligence and devotion for his particular friends then otherwise; as expecting the same measure of Charity afterwards from his own. But as to this matter of Funerall and

and all that solemnity which we use about interring the body, whatsoever is spent or done that way it is no succour or salvation to the soul, but an office of pure humanity agreeable unto and issuing from that affection, whereby all men naturally love *their*

own flesh, yea and think it reasonable, that in some cases a man should have care of his neighbours body, as well as of his own, and in this case especially, when the spirit is gone to whom it did belong, when time was, to uphold and govern it. And truly if they who believe not the resurrection of the flesh, do yet perform such things to their dead, how much more ought we to do so who believe not onely that

The final resolution of the question, that it is good carefully to bury the dead, and also to bury them in places consecrate to Martyrs, and when their reliques are the reason of it.

that the dead body shall rise again and live forever, but that the performance of such good offices towards them is it self in some sort a testimony of that Faith. But that we bury them at the *Memories* of the Martyrs, as I have said before, in this respect onely it seems to me to advantage the dead, namely that thereby the affection of his friends *praying for him, and commending him to the Patronage of these martyrs,* may be increased.

Thus have you my answer, framed as well as I could, unto such points as you thought expedient to enquire of me: if it seems overlong, I desire you would pardon me, and impute it to the delight and
af-

affection I have to hold discourse with you. As for the book it self, I intreat your venerable Charity would let me know by your letters ere long what you think of it. I believe, it will be much more welcome for the bearer's sake, viz. our Brother and fellow-Priest *Candidianus*, whom for the report your letters gave of him, I received with all affection, and dismissed again as much against my will: For verily he much comforted us with his presence in Christs Charity; and to speak but the truth, I complied with your desires much upon his instance. For indeed your letters found me so distracted with other cares, that you may attribute not a little

little to his daily solliciting
and minding me thereof, if
you receive any com-
petent answer to your
question.

* *

+

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Deo Gratias.

